

HUGHES

Application No. 09/623,977

July 26, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Currently, claims 1-26 are pending in this application.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103:

Claims 1-8, 10-14 and 16-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Ludwig et al (U.S. '539, hereinafter "Ludwig"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

For a reference to anticipate a claim, each element must be found, either expressly or under principles of inherency, in the reference. Applicant submits that Ludwig fails to disclose each element of the claimed invention. In particular, Ludwig fails to disclose a conference bridge having a multichannel connection to each of a plurality of terminal equipments in which the multichannel connection comprises a plurality of individual channels, as required by independent claims 1, 3, 10, 12, 16 and 17 and their respective dependents. Every one of the plurality of terminal equipments in a teleconferencing system thus receives a multichannel connection comprising a plurality of individual channels. Independent claims 1, 10 and 16-17 further require that each of the individual channels received in one of the multichannel connections is separately processed by one of the terminal equipments.

Ludwig merely discloses only one channel (containing a mixed signal of a number of participants) transmitted between any two sites. The local output of each participant in Ludwig is all participants, minus the local participant channel. This is all carried on a

single channel. Each terminal equipment therefore provides a single output representing all of the other terminal equipments. In marked contrast, the present invention requires a multichannel connection comprising a plurality of individual channels.

The claimed multichannel connection comprising a plurality of individual channels is not disclosed by the single audio output comprising a mix of several channels described by Ludwig. The recitation of "The signal mixing" on page 3, line 28 of the specification has been amended to recite "A signal concentration." This amendment is clearly supported by, for example, Fig. 2 of the application which shows an "N:M Concentrator 230." As further disclosed on page 4, line 5 to page 5, line 18 of the original specification, concentrator 230 combines various inputs into an audio signal having a smaller number of channels. These channels are transmitted to customer equipments using respective multiple-channel links 5.

Ludwig is similar to admitted prior art Fig. 1 of the present application in many respects. In particular, admitted prior art Fig. 1 of the present application discloses a teleconferencing system in which there is a single monophonic signal providing a summation of all of the channels input to an exchange bridge equipment 100. Exchange bridge equipment 100 includes a combiner 120 which generates a combined signal. The combined signal is transmitted to each of the terminal equipments (i.e., a "broadcast summed signal" as explicitly noted in Fig. 1 is transmitted to each terminal equipment). While all of the channels are input to combiner 120 of exchange bridge equipment 100, a single monophonic signal is transmitted to each of the terminal equipments. In contrast,

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the present invention requires a multichannel connection having a plurality of individual channels.

With respect to independent claims 3 and 12, Ludwig further fails to teach or suggest a conference bridge identifying currently active input channels and transmitting only those active channels over a multichannel connection together with control information identifying the transmitted channels. As discussed above, Ludwig fails to disclose a multichannel connection as claimed.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 1-8, 10-14 and 16-17 are not anticipated by Ludwig and respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §102 be withdrawn.

Claims 9 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Ludwig. Since claims 9 and 15 depend at least indirectly from claims 1 and 10, respectively, Applicant submits that these claims are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 10. Ludwig fails to disclose all of the limitations of claims 1 and 10 and thus all of the limitations of claims 9 and 15.

New Claims:

New claims 18-26 have been added to provide additional protection for the invention. Claims 18 and 19 depend from independent claims 3 and 12, respectively, and are therefore allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from these independent base claims. Claims 20 and 21 depend from independent claims 1 and 10, respectively, and are therefore allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from these independent base

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claims. Claims 22-26 require, inter alia, a concentrator receiving M input channels and outputting N individual channels in a multichannel connection. Applicant submits that new claims 18-26 are allowable.

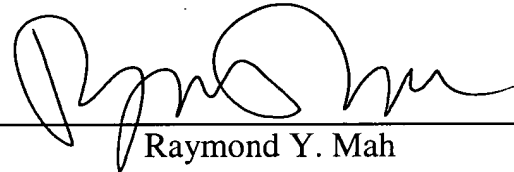
Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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